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## FOLK-LORE SCRAP-BOOK.

DAKOTA LEGEND. — "The Messenger," of Worcester, Mass., July 28, 1888, contains what purports to be a Dakota legend of the Creation, ultimately derived from a missionary, Father Bushman. It exhibits a mixture of the teaching of the priest with Indian myth. If any part of the story is not free invention on the part of the Indian narrator, but of genuine Dakota origin, it may be suspected that it formed part of the myth of some Bear gens, and not of the whole Dakota nation.

According to this narrative, among beings created by the Great Spirit, the most perfect were bears. There were two bears living together, an elder and a younger brother. The elder persecuted his weaker brother, and took away from him his share of the wild plums on which they fed. The Great Spirit took pity on the younger brother, and promised him that if he ceased crying he would make him his brother's master. The younger ceased weeping, and fell asleep; on which the Great Spirit changed him into a man, and also took a bone from his fore-arm, out of which he made a female helpmate like himself. As the little bear was told by the Great Spirit not to cry, Indians do not shed tears. When the little bear, having become a man, saw his helpmate, he rushed to embrace her, but the Great Spirit forbade it as immodest; wherefore Indians never caress their wives in public. The Great Spirit now told the younger brother to walk on two feet in order to show his superiority, and at the same time forbade him and his mate to eat plums, which had been the cause of the original trouble. The elder brother, seeing his brother's beauty and upright walk, became jealous, and attempted to beat him, but found the latter his superior in force. Therefore, he resorted to artifice, picked some fine plums, and offered them to his brother, who declined, pleading the prohibition of the Great Spirit. The bear now went to the female, and showed her the fruit; when she was told that her husband had formerly partaken of the fruit, she accepted it. On account of this disobedience, the Great Spirit made her the slave of her husband. He also drove the bear into the mountains, and forbade him in future to associate with mankind.

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NOTES AND QUERIES.

At a late meeting of the Council of the Folk-Lore Society, London, much interest was expressed in the advance of the study of Folk-Lore in the United States, and the Honorary Secretary was deputed to express the satisfaction felt by the Council in the progress of the American Society. The Folk-Lore Society, established in 1878, was the first of the European organizations of the sort; and, as was stated in the first number of this Journal, must be regarded, in an especial sense, as standing in a parental relation to the American Folk-Lore Society.

MR. JOSEPH LA FLESCHÉ, of the Omaha Tribe of Indians, who, in the first article of this number, gives an account of the funeral customs of his people, is a son of Francis La Flesché, whose remarkable life is noticed on page 11. Mr. La Flesché, following his father's footsteps, is actively interested in preserving the traditions of his tribe, and is now assisting Miss Alice C. Fletcher in her work of collecting and transcribing Omaha songs. Between one and two hundred songs have been obtained from native singers, and the music noted, which, having been repeated to Indians of the tribe, has been recognized and pronounced correct. The work upon this has led (as we are informed) to many interesting discoveries concerning time, rhythm, pitch, and melody, as well as the scale. The material includes sacred and secular songs, songs of love, war, of death, of derision, and of triumph, and songs devoted to religious ceremonies. This work is the product of the labor of six years. To these must be added songs of other tribes, and of societies kindred to the Omahas, which offer interesting comparisons.

An account of the sacred pole, and of the tradition given to its keepers, has been secured, as well as a detailed account of all the ceremonies connected with it, and their bearing upon tribal autonomy. A full statement has also been obtained of all the forms indispensable in order to gain admission into the inner circle of chiefs, and those connected with the sacred pole and pack, which have never before been fully recorded. These, together with other rites and ceremonies, will render the forthcoming monograph a complete picture of the life of the people.

BRIDES DANCING BAREFOOT. [See vol. i. p. 235.]—I am indebted to B. W. Green, Esq., of Norfolk, Va., for calling my attention to a passage in Grose's little work on "Popular Superstitions," appended to his "Provincial Glossary," which explains the practice of dancing barefoot at weddings. Grose says (2d ed. 1790, p. 45): "If in a family the youngest daughter should be married before her elder sisters, they must all dance at her wedding without shoes; this will counteract their ill-luck, and procure them husbands." It is, therefore, evident that, in the passage cited by me, it was not as a bride that Sally was to have danced barefoot; but that the younger sister had expected to be a bride first, and to see the elder sister perform that act of self-humiliation. — *T. W. H., Cambridge, Mass.*

To this citation may be added the following:—

"It is an old Shropshire custom, kept up in humble life, that if a younger sister should be married before her elders, the latter must dance at the wedding in their 'stocking-feet.' This was actually done at a wedding at Hodnet in 1881. And in the same year a maid-servant, who omitted to do so at a younger sister's wedding, was thus accosted by her aunt, who met her accidentally in the town of Wellington next day. 'So I hear you didna dance barfut! I'm ashamed of you. If I'd a been there I'd 'a made you do it.'" — *Shropshire Folk-Lore*, ed. by C. F. Burne, London, 1883, p. 291.

The editor further quotes from Chambers' "Book of Days," to the effect